

## Chapter 13 – Execution

Callum knew that however the attacks turned out, he would have to be very mobile afterward, and preferably not even in the same state. His gravitykinesis helped with that, especially since he'd made himself a really stupid looking flying chair to use instead of his motorcycle. He'd taken an ordinary office chair and bolted on a vertical metal frame to make a sort of shelf above his head. The shelf just had some bags of concrete for mass, so when he used it for lift the chair would just hang straight down.

He used it to ferry components out to each area ahead of time, caching the small things inside utility spaces and the big things he just put caution tape on. Nobody really questioned why a big piece of wooden piling was lying around if it had caution tape on it. Besides, putting them next to telephone poles made them look semi-official.

Callum was pretty sure he could have tried glamouring them but he was risking enough by using teleportation to move them into position near the targets. A thousand yards or so away, sure, but that might well be dangerously close if he wanted to remain unobserved. He had basically one data point for how far a real mage could sense, and he didn't think Gayle was a good example, so the best he could do was err on the side of caution and hope. Just that much sucked up another of his days, and he had to crash early from simple exhaustion.

Part of the reason he was working himself so hard was to avoid thinking too much about what he was doing. Taking out vampires who had murdered people and who had kidnapped a kid in a fit of passion was one thing, but a cold assassination was something else. Not something that he would have considered in his old life.

He was lying in bed worrying it over in his mind when he suddenly sat upright and fumbled for his laptop. All that planning and he hadn't bothered to check whether all the vampires had actually been doing anything untoward. After seeing one, Callum had just taken it for granted that all the vampires Chester had steered him to were murderers, rather than a political annoyance.

It was a thought that had come far, far too late, but after a few minutes of sleuthing he found that he hadn't made a horrible mistake. The other towns also had recent murders or missing persons, and given the population in each that was exceedingly unlikely. Especially since in all the cases there were no details or suspects, just a rote article from a disinterested reporter.

That relieved his mind enough that he could finally sleep.

In the morning he drove to his staging area, a camp site off in the middle of nowhere, screened by trees. Hopefully it wouldn't matter where he started from, but just in case he had the

remainder of his gold and cash and guns bundled up and cached at the bottom of a nearby lake, wrapped in plastic and duct tape.

He teleported his stupid transportation chair outside of the motorhome, swearing to himself that he'd come up with something less awful-looking or at least learn to properly smooth out the gravity, and settled in with a map and a GPS-enabled burner phone. He was going to be traveling very fast and the GPS would reflect that, and he didn't want anything of his associated with the locations, but he still hated to have to spend the money. Especially since it was separate from the one he was using to communicate with Chester; he'd have to throw away *two* phones at the end of it, which meant he'd be out of magical phones for a while.

Even though he'd be using the glamour focus, he took the time to dress himself differently, apply some henna tattoos, and don a hairpiece in order to look different. Callum found it amusing how much time he was spending on makeup as a middle-aged man, solely so he looked different than he did. Then he was off, moving in thirty-second jaunts in the direction of the first town.

He picked the one without a mage because that was the safest for ensuring his plan really did work as intended. He decided to bring along a shotgun with a bunch of mordite ammunition just in case, since it was always good to have extra options when things went badly, but he hoped it wouldn't be necessary. Callum still didn't know how active vampires *could* be during the day, since all the lore about them was mostly invented, and he didn't want to tangle with one even if it was sleepy.

The cache of materials was still in the duct he'd put it in before, and a quick teleport moved it all into the garage he was using as a staging point. The occupant was gone for work, or so Callum assumed, and he didn't want to set things up in the open. Even if there wasn't much to set up, it would look pretty weird to any passers-by. The preparations consisted of eight steel plates, which he put on top of wire holders to raise them off the ground.

Steel plates with cakes of densely-packed thermite on top of each.

His way of thinking was that if a point-blank shotgun round worked on a supernatural, so would that. Especially since he could deliver it directly to them. It also solved his problem of needing to jump portals around and rely on his gun not to jam. Igniting thermite was a little tricky but the internet was full of wonders and had multiple designs using wires and electricity so he could do it all simultaneously.

The stuff had not even been that hard to make, especially since he could just rent some equipment for the day to help with the metal powder. It probably wasn't as good as real commercial stuff, but he didn't want to buy that. He didn't know if he *could* buy that, and he

wasn't interested in stealing anything. Robbing the vamps was one thing, but hurting ordinary folks by taking their stuff was not in his nature.

Callum reached out to find all his targets, shaping a teleport field around each of the plates and their payloads and threading a vis strand through the static ward so he had a connection. It was quite a strain, holding eight inputs and eight outputs, but after all the practice he'd put himself through it wasn't unreasonable.

He touched the ignition wire to the terminals of the car battery that he'd brought with him, and the thermite popped and began to fizz with sparks as burning magnesium started the process. That was his cue to teleport them directly atop the sleeping vampire's faces, thermite-cake-side down.

The steel plate was mostly just there in case he was too slow with the teleport but also because he wanted something to help contain all the heat and sparks and redirect them to where they'd do the most good. Which was to say, directly into the vampire's faces. Burning thermite acted quickly, so Callum wasn't actually sure if the vamps had time to scream or make any real sign before it did its work.

Fire alarms started going off, the sprinkler system kicked in, and people started running around, but it was far too late for that. A pile of thermite to the face was as effective as Callum could have ever hoped, but he was glad he didn't have to see it with his actual eyes. Or smell it.

Like the first time, there were some bags of cash and containers of gold, and he grabbed those. He didn't bother with the electronics or the guns, though he wouldn't have said no to more special ammunition, but a few thousand dollars and a few kilograms of gold didn't really take up *that* much space. He did consider stealing the ward, too, but he didn't have any confidence in being able to shut it down, so he left it be. After one last quick pass to make sure he hadn't missed something incredibly important, he distributed a bunch of his ball bearings to purge the indications of his teleports and started to tidy up.

Callum teleported the wire racks into some restaurant's dumpster and added a cleanup bead, then picked up the car battery with one hand and his loot with the other. He wasn't sure that the thralls would be able to find his trail without supernatural aid, but they were probably calling in that aid already so he didn't want to stick around, and simply teleported himself back to his conveyance.

The glamour residue would indicate a mage had been there, but that was probably okay because literally all of them used glammers. It wasn't even his own vis, it was mana, so there was nothing identifying on it. He still would have preferred to clean it up, but his vortex enchantments only worked on his own vis so he just let it be. A few seconds later, he was miles

away, and he took the opportunity to turn on his phone and text the number Chester had given him. Just three words, letting him know that the nest was destroyed, then he turned it off again.

That one had been easy. The other three would be more difficult, because there were mages involved. Mages with shields up, and he had no idea how robust those shields were. That was, frankly, where the whole thing could fall apart. A mage might well be able to track him, though he doubted any of them could move as fast as he could with his weird spatial dragging technique.

There were also more targets in general. More vampires, who had to be killed after the mage, and that meant they might have time to realize what was going on. The thermite-to-the-face technique wouldn't work all that well if they were up and moving about, especially if they were moving supernaturally fast. Callum's own reflexes were not good enough to keep up with that kind of speed.

That was really what he was counting on when it came to the other mages. They were still human, still squishy, and still slow, relatively speaking. He was pretty sure they were counting on their wards to warn them of what was going on, and the ones he'd seen so far he could bypass. While he was far more uncomfortable with killing humans as opposed to vampires, they were actively helping the vampires murder people. The GAR-sanctioned mages were presumably mercenaries or otherwise willing, but the thralls might be just protection detail and under some kind of coercion, so at least in this case he could probably ignore them.

Although Callum could make do without a vantage point as such, height made his plan easier, so he'd perched himself on top of a water tower near the theatre. The big cylinder had a flat top that shielded him from casual observation, and there was enough room there to set out his plates of thermite.

He'd practiced, and holding twelve entry and exit points was too much, so he was going to have to work in sets of six. It shouldn't make a difference, because really, he had gotten quite fast at teleporting, but every second counted. The big wooden piling rested just beyond the thermite plates, and in theory he could try and get that going at the same time, but in practice he could only strain his multitasking so far.

It took Callum a few minutes to make completely sure he'd found all his targets. Aside from the mage, of course, who was in an inner room, apparently unfazed by the body count of his employers because he was just sitting there watching television. Being thus distracted didn't seem to impact his ability to keep up the wards, but on closer inspection Callum was pretty sure he was just using a focus for it.

It made sense. Callum couldn't imagine keeping up a complicated spell like that for hours or days on end, and it probably was constructed properly so it took less effort than one of Callum's spells. In fact, it probably could run off of some kind of storage like that bracelet from GAR or the unmanned ward, so the mage didn't have to supply it the whole time.

The wards and shield only covered the ground, though, so it was actually easier for Callum to just run a thread of vis over in preparation for teleporting the thermite. He kept a close metaphorical eye on the mage, but didn't get so much as a twitch as the vis thread entered the theater. Callum took a few breaths, knowing the next thirty seconds or so were going to be utterly manic, and touched the ignition wires to the car battery.

Thermite sparked and he teleported the six into place, then grabbed the second set and lit them up, fumbling for a moment with the gloves he was using to insulate himself from the wire. Then he delivered the other six and he busied himself with the piling. After seeing how well it had performed at the first stop, Callum trusted that the stuff would do its job, he just had to take care of the mage.

He'd fastened some two-by-fours in a cross pattern at one end to encourage the thing to not tilt as it fell, though his understanding of lift dynamics was admittedly hazy. Callum wasn't sure how much it weighed, but he was damn glad he could lift it with gravitykinesis instead of his muscles, because it was *heavy*. He teleported it to the top of his range and angled it so it was facing directly down, then let it drop. That much wood going that quickly picked up a hell of a lot of force.

In the few seconds of freefall, the earth mage had maybe started to stir. His head had turned, at least, and possibly the shield had intensified, but Callum couldn't be certain about that. But he certainly wasn't on guard and alert enough to react properly when a foot-wide diameter portal snapped into existence in the ceiling of the room and a huge chunk of wood came smashing down from three stories up.

Needless to say, the results were messy.

A stone shield *did* snap into place, reacting either to the mage's panic or the actual physical threat, but it wasn't enough to defend against several hundred pounds traveling at something like seventy miles an hour. Actually, Callum wasn't sure that the mage was dead, but the ward collapsed which was good enough for him. He repeated the process of grabbing the valuables and teleported out the wooden piling while he was at it.

The bloodstains on the end of the wood made him queasy, as watching things through spatial sense was very far different than seeing it for real, but he didn't have time for second-guessing himself. The piling came along on his first jaunt a few miles away, to where he'd plotted out

the nearest bit of woodland, and he dumped it in a stream he'd found there. He had to actually take a break then, getting jerky and tea out of the bags attached to the chair, simply because moving that much volume completely tanked his reserves.

He didn't let himself rest long, though, and as soon as he felt up to it he continued his haphazard trail back to his motorhome. It was more or less on the way, and he needed to stash everything he'd taken. Halfway there he stopped to text Chester with another update, and saw that the Alpha had replied with nothing more than a thumbs-up to his first.

Callum gave himself fifteen minutes to just completely crash back at home. While time was of the essence, making it to the next stop in the approximate half-hour he could manage with his chair and still having enough vis to repeat his last performance was dependent on his total reserves. Despite all the practice and strain he'd been putting himself through, he still didn't have a lot of magical endurance.

In the end it actually took him more like an hour to get to his next target, and they seemed to be on guard. At least, the mage there was pacing about, the thralls were guarding every chokepoint and window, and there were two layers of wards, not just one. Which just seemed silly, to him. Two layers of walls didn't mean much when you still left the windows open.

His vantage was not a handy water tower, but the top of some weird brutalist grain silo that was clearly from a much earlier era in the town's history. It was actually higher than the water tower, putting the motel and the water-fire mage just at the edge of his perceptions. The wind was pretty strong, and he was glad that he'd taken the time to compress and pack the thermite even if he did put the plates behind the piling to shelter it from the wind.

The first snag came when he was searching for the vampires in the motel. None of them were up and about, thank goodness. It seemed their nocturnal habits were strong enough that they didn't or couldn't stay up. But there were two young people, a man and a woman, locked in a room with chains on their ankles. A white-hot rage swept aside any of the worries he'd had before as he studied them with his senses. It seemed that *every* mage that GAR lent out to the vampires was complicit in their doings.

He didn't know if they were shifters or if they were just unfortunate college students that had been abducted for food. Either way, he wasn't going to let them stay there. The question was where he could put them. Though he could teleport them to basically anywhere within his sensory range, it would be best if he put them somewhere that the shifters could find them quickly.

Since they wouldn't see him, there was no way they could give him away, but a little bit of obfuscation was probably needed to keep people from guessing they'd simply been teleported

out. Callum took a moment to work up and discard a number of possible plans before deciding on one he liked, though it'd have to wait until after he took care of his targets.

Once again he put together the thermite charges and plates, checking to make sure the piling was ready. He expected the fire-water mage would be even less able to deal with it than the earth mage, but that was sheer conjecture. Callum had no idea how mages did actual combat and whether having two types of aspects to their vis meant they were stronger or what.

"Volley one," he muttered under his breath as he sparked the thermite and teleported it into place. "Volley two. Now, artillery." He lofted the piling over the side and let it fall. He snapped open a portal just above the fire-water mage just before the piling hit the ground, the wood falling at terminal velocity. There was a sort of detonation of magic from the mage's shields and Callum's portal destabilized and vanished.

Unfortunately for the mage on the other end, that didn't stop most of the piling from slamming into him. For a purely magic attack, and possibly for someone full of vis like a mage or a supernatural, the burst would have been extremely effective. Maybe it even would have worked against magical materials, but against a two hundred pound chunk of wood, it didn't do much. It was only half of the piling, as the portal collapse had torn it apart, but half was enough.

The hardest few seconds over with, Callum started sweeping back over the motel and cursed when he saw that one of the vampires was sitting up. Apparently that particular thermite cake hadn't ignited for some reason, which wasn't terribly surprising. But it was terribly inconvenient, since he had hoped to get away without having to use a gun. He grabbed the shotgun loaded with mordite rounds and formed a portal in the barrel, the other one at the back of the vampire's neck, pointed upward as he pulled the trigger.

The mess the ordinary rounds had made was nothing to how the mordite round practically disintegrated the vampire's head. Callum took a moment to reposition the thermite and ignite it properly by displacing some still-molten sparks from its companions. It probably wouldn't hide the fact that he'd had to shoot the vampire instead of burning it to death, but he didn't like the idea of leaving a failed thermite charge at the scene.

Of course, the thump of the impact and the sound of the gunshot got people's attention, but Callum wasn't overly worried about the thralls. He was more concerned with getting the evidence out of there and rescuing the captives. Now that people were alerted, he had less time, so he formed a small portal between him and just behind the captives.

"Close your eyes," he told him, speaking with an affected hoarseness to disguise his voice. "I'm getting you out of here." The pair jerked around, so he had to repeat the instructions. "Close

your eyes!” He said again, and the two of them obeyed. He sent one end of the portal bouncing around the area of town he could sense, especially along streets, to provide the illusion of some kind of movement by way of varying sounds, before teleporting them into an employee bathroom at an auto repair shop.

Once again he took out his phone, this time texting Chester more of an update.

*Coren nest done. Two captives transferred to Atkins Automotive employee bathroom.*

Callum assumed there was some process for easing people who had been caught up in supernatural issues back into mundane life, but he'd have to follow up to make sure. No doubt GAR would want to question the pair, but his little sound distraction would hopefully muddy the waters enough that it didn't seem like teleportation. Of course, if it turned out that Chester or GAR simply vanished unfortunate victims like that, then Callum would have to deal with those involved. They were Callum's responsibility, and if the officials couldn't be trusted then he'd have to find a non-official option.

Exactly what that option might be, he didn't know.

He scattered his cleanup bearings and grabbed what valuables he could sense, glad that the vampires had a standard way of storing them, as well as nabbing the two halves of the piling that had been torn apart by the portal. One from inside the motel, one from the bottom of the grain silo. Callum ditched them in the same way as the first, by putting them in some wooded land that was probably someone's backyard, then had to take more time out to rest and regain mana.

Energy drinks didn't seem to do much for vis regeneration, and his ability to store energy to draw on for later use was limited. He'd give an awful lot for proper storage stones or crystals or however that bracelet GAR had used on him had worked. In hindsight he should have figured out whatever was powering that first ward, but the best he could do at the moment was eat and nap, and he was definitely flagging. If the fourth one looked significantly tougher, then he might need to put it off until later, or skip it entirely. But he'd have to at least check to see if there were more captives.

Overall, the first three stops had taken him a little over two hours. He felt twitchy still, despite or perhaps because of how easy it had been. The few hiccups that had appeared hadn't been bad, and as far as he knew nobody had the slightest idea what his avenue of attack was. They were in some respect ready for him, but they thought he'd be coming at them physically, instead of remotely. Still, he was worried that if he couldn't take them by surprise, he couldn't do anything at all.



After another half hour of relaxing in his stupid chair and downing another tea, and being glad he was in the woods so he could just go behind a tree when the tea caught up with him, he started north toward the final target. When he got to the outskirts he turned on his phone in case he needed to text Chester an update and found that he had a message waiting for him.

*Vamps withdrawing. Cancel fourth.*

That was actually somewhat of a relief. While the vampires in question were undoubtedly murderers and deserved to die, that meant the only reason that he absolutely needed to go after them at the moment was to free anyone they had. He was completely exhausted, so he didn't trust himself to properly pull off another mass attack, but he had to know.

He replied with a thumbs up, and continued on into town in order to find out. While he was there, he'd retrieve his supplies too. It wouldn't do to have someone find where he'd stashed them, even if it was unlikely. He paused just within sensory range of the target, studying them as the vampires and their thralls packed, the former moving somewhat sluggishly, but moving. Fortunately for everyone it was only vamps and thralls, with no poor victims, and a scant half-hour later their convoy headed away.

On the way back to his motorhome, Callum found himself crashing hard. It was like being out of mana, only worse. It was only by gritting his teeth and cracking open some energy drinks that tasted like poison that he managed to get himself close enough to the motorhome to teleport himself and his bags the rest of the way. The chair he left in the woods. The plan was to properly dispose of it, but he couldn't manage it at the moment. He could barely manage crawling into his bed before he conked out completely.

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"So how the hell is he doing that?" Chester asked the room at large. The room consisted of the Wolfpack, his mate Lisa, Lucy, and Jasper, who were the only ones actually read into Mister Brown. Or whoever he was.

"He might have access to the GAR teleportation network," Jasper said. "Or it's..." He pursed his lips. "The fae supposedly had ways back into Faerie other than the actual portal. It's never been confirmed, but their magic doesn't work like ours so I've always thought it was possible."

"Lucy?"

"He's only turning his phone on near the locations. I could give you a cell quadrant but that's it." She shrugged. "Sorry boss-man, I can't tell you how he did it."

"Shame," Chester sighed. "I'd love to be able to move my own people around that fast."

"I would too, but the way Jessica talked I don't think he'd reveal his methods," Lisa said, doing her best to be the voice of reason. "Let alone agree to bring along shifters."

"I suppose not," Chester agreed. The man had reported two nests destroyed in less than an hour, hundreds of miles apart from each other. When he sent in his people, there were only mundanes there. The vampires and mages were dead, gruesomely so, and simply calling them out under the Accords meant that the thralls had to defend everything themselves, or surrender. Considering the circumstances, they were encouraged to surrender. Nice and neat and inside the rules, ignoring the person outside the rules removing the supernaturals on site.

"My question is how he bypassed the wards at the sites," Jasper said thoughtfully. "He should have rung the alarm bells crossing them, or they should have been destroyed. It's just very strange they were still intact."

"There's no lock or alarm in the world that can't be bypassed," Chester told him. "You know that as well as I do."

"Yeah..." Jasper sighed. "But the only ward-picking foci I heard of was up in Archmage level stuff that GAR had control over. But this guy's got no magic?"

"Well he's obviously a supernatural, but I guess the details don't matter at this point." Chester waved it aside. "Point is, I wasn't expecting anything like this, so I'm going to owe him more than a few lessons from Jasper on my behalf." He glanced around at his audience. "I'd rather not owe him favors for long, I suspect that they could become ruinous if he waited until he really needed them."

"You know, he's careful about burner phones and stuff, but I checked on his identities and he's got nobody working for him on the information angle," Lucy said. "Nobody's sanitizing or purging any of the data that *does* accumulate on him. Which isn't much, but still."

"Are you volunteering then, Lucy?" Chester raised his eyebrows at her. "What you do for me is already skirting the edges of what you can get away with while working for GAR. Helping him would be completely compromising yourself."

"Eh, I didn't turn out a mage so none of them are going to give me the time of day anyway." Lucy shrugged, but it was a bit of a sore point with her. Not every child of a mage bloodline actually turned out to be a mage. Some were merely magic sensitive, like Lucy, and while they were inside the supernatural world they were barely more than mundanes.

Chester sympathized with them, and that was one reason he employed Lucy and Jasper, but while they both appreciated the work and safety, they were somewhat isolated. Neither of

them were shifters or pack, after all, and sympathy went only so far. They just weren't equipped for the relationships shifters had with each other.

"I'm not your dad," Chester said with a shrug. "I'll introduce you, but you'll have to convince him on your own merits."

"Not a problem, boss-man." She gave him a thumbs-up and he rolled his eyes, answering his phone. It was his Alpha from Lewisburg, the second place on Mister Brown's hitlist.

"Chester here," he answered.

"One of the thralls called GAR, so we're going to have agent in our fur soon enough," Alpha Greene told him. "Also, weird thing — something smashed that mage good. The smell was lumber, pine, aged near some place with sawdust, probably a lumberyard. I'd say just a chunk of wood he bought somewhere, yet oddly I couldn't scent where it went or smell a blood trail out."

"That's quite mysterious," Chester said blandly. It was good to know there were some limits to the man's ability to pass without trace, but they'd already guessed he had some ability to suppress scent. "Just secure things. Make sure you can account for and verify everyone's whereabouts."

"Yes, Alpha." Green hung up, and Chester looked around at everyone.

"That was faster than we expected," one of the Wolfpack noted.

"He left the thralls alive," Chester said. "I'm not actually sure why, but it does make things more ridiculous. And slightly annoying." Chester shrugged. "At least calling GAR means that we can let the mages bear the expense of shipping the thralls back."

The phone on the table buzzed. The text message flashed up on the screen on the far side of the room, a setup that existed mostly because Lucy couldn't keep her hands to herself.

*Coren nest done. Two captives transferred to Atkins Automotive employee bathroom.*

"Oh, hell." Chester stared at the message. The issue wasn't that the third target had been taken care of, it was that there were mundanes involved. "Now we need to call GAR. Lisa?"

"On it," she said, while he rang up his Alpha in Corensville.

"Pierre? Send four to Atkins Automotive, there's some mundane witnesses in the employee bathroom. Have everyone else move on the nest. Call them out, and then go in."

“Yes, Alpha,” Pierre said. He didn’t sound enthusiastic, but he didn’t know that the vampires were dead. Chester had hinted there were some core pack assets in the vicinity, even if he wasn’t supposed to interfere with a regional dispute, just to ensure it didn’t sound like he was ordering some suicide charge.

He’d probably call back soon enough, wanting answers Chester couldn’t give him. They all had. Mister Brown’s work was really doing a lot for his mystique, which was fantastic, though really secondary to why he’d actually asked for hits on those vampires. He needed to keep his people safe.

“Yes, from vampires,” Lisa was saying. “Your contact is Alexander Pierre. Phone number...” Chester listened to her rattle off the information to GAR and watched his phone. It was a strangely relaxing war council. When he couldn’t do things himself, he found himself climbing the walls from impatience. Normally.

With what Mister Brown was capable of, all he needed to do was wait and tell his people to secure empty buildings. The only worry was if the vampires did manage to catch him, and Chester rather doubted that was going to happen. There were still some strange oddities about the way the man acted, but nobody sane would go up against vampires unless they could outfight one.

His personal phone rang again, and he lifted his eyebrows at the name that appeared for the caller. Certainly, he had been intending for this little operation to get attention, but he hadn’t actually anticipated Mister Brown doing all four on the same day. Apparently Chester wasn’t the only one who had been impressed.

“Chester here,” he answered.

“Call them off,” a voice growled over the receiver.

“Well hello to you, too, Vlad,” Chester said brightly. The name of the Master of the Minneapolis nest wasn’t actually Vlad, it was Antoine Lavigne, but Chester enjoyed needling him.

“Call them off,” Antoine repeated, with no change in tone.

“I don’t have any idea what you’re talking about,” Chester said, infusing his voice with great cheer. “Attacking your nests without an official challenge in place would be a violation of the accords.” In the same way that establishing the nests in shifter territories was, but Chester wasn’t good friends with the local GAR adjudicator the way Antoine was.

"I'm withdrawing from Carrington," Antoine said, obviously between his teeth. "So call them off."

"Honestly, it's like you don't trust me at all," Chester replied. "Though thank you for telling me you're withdrawing from Carrington. I know Alpha Beys will be glad he can relax." While he talked, he reached for the other phone and texted a reply to Mister Brown.

*Vamps withdrawing. Cancel fourth.*

"Don't think I'm beat, Chester," Antoine warned. "I don't know who it is you got to do this, but when I find them, they're going to wish GAR had got to them first."

"Like I said, Vlad, it would be a violation of the accords if I had someone working for me! As you know, my pack very strictly follows the rules."

Antoine hung up. Chester grinned.